/484 cont./

223 411 of the crowded flock of birds; this may hit one or another of them and stun them. Even the Fuegian cannot hit a definite target at the same distance or farther away, since the sling is not very accurate, but it does carry a stone in a high arc to a distance of 80 meters (192). Nevertheless, we must admit, to

192. On this subject Bove (e):158 and Colini:161, as well as Lovisato (a):198 and (b):136, have grossly exaggerated. Hyades (h):32 and (q):357 protested against their assertions which literally coincide.

[526] use Hyades' (g):35 words, that the Yamana "are very skillful in manipulating them," and in the course of the day they very often use the sling just for fun (193).

193. This can hardly be more clearly expressed than Bridges has done: "The amusement these natives are most fond of is slinging at birds; they often go along the shores here with their slings" (VSA:XII, 55:1965) /cited in English/.

411 482 Naturally, our Indians must have their slings handy. Their way of carrying them is surprisingly advantageous. Most of them hang the two strings of sinew around the neck and draw the last third of it over the folded center section, without any kind of knotting; the ends hang down freely. With a single movement of the left hand to grasp the center section, the sling is ready to be used. At the same moment the right hand puts the stones in position and grasps the ends, ready to throw (Fig. 41). Others draw the two sinew-strings around the head, one on each side, so that the center section is in the back, and then simply loop the free ends over each other. Finally, a few of them tie the sling around their hips (194). As we have said, they put the sling,

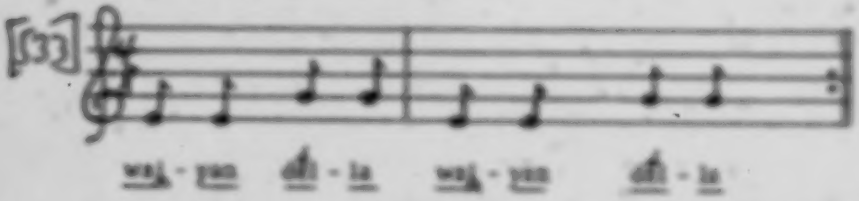
194. Fitz-Roy (a):138 noticed that "a man always carries his sling around his neck or waist, wherever he goes" /cited in English/.

/788 cont./

After two syllables the whole column quickly bends to the other side. Gradually the movement is accelerated up to top speed, which arouses great merriment. When the column breaks up at the end, they all roll around happily in the grass (200).

200. SD:265 mentions kamuluuca, "a game in which this word is intoned and regulates the rate of swaying the body" /cited in English/. This undoubtedly refers to the game described above.

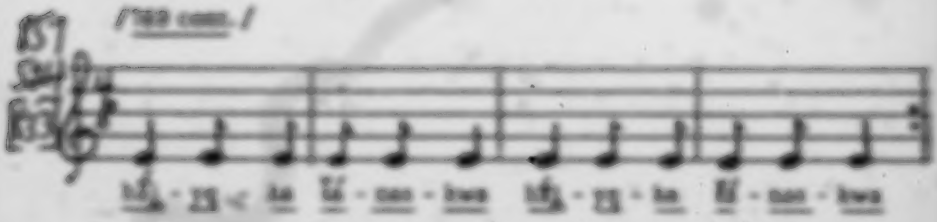
Wajyandílla: This game is almost like Ejyaílla. Here, too, the players form a long row, but they do not embrace each other; instead, each person places his hands on the shoulders of the one squatting in front of him. This means that the column is by no means as closely locked as in Ejyaílla and hence does not sway as far to one side. The word wajyandílla is repeated along with the rhythmic body movements as follows:



/788/ Just as this word formation can be broken down into wájyana, the bow, and díla, díla, "to roll, fall as a barrel down a bank" /cited in English/, according to SD:229, so the game is intended to imitate the swaying of a bowstave whose two ends are grasped with the hands. Toward the end of this game the swaying back and forth of the body is accelerated.

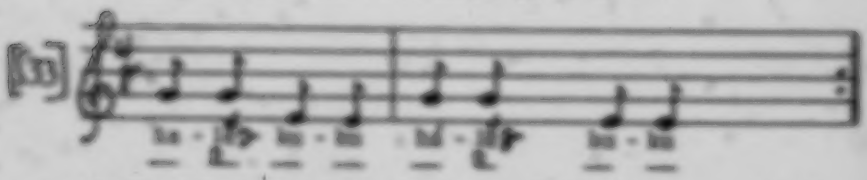
Hájyakáli: This is entertainment chiefly for boys and men. They form a column, standing one behind the other, headed by the largest one. Each of them bends his knee and lifts his leg up and back, holding it at the ankle with the hand on the corresponding side of the body. It is hard to keep one's balance in this position. The whole column then hops backwards, without turning around, to the following rhythm:

/789 cont./



The free foot touches the ground on the first, third, and fifth syllable. It is too tiring for the dancers to keep up the swig to the end. Hence the onlookers continue it and after a time accelerate it to such an extent that the dancers can no longer follow. The column disintegrates in utter confusion. Sometimes the column is allowed to extend a considerable distance from the spectators while the latter sing softer and softer as though the column were losing itself in the far distance. This game is very popular during the Tahgan festival because it is quiet.

Ha-ga-kuhe: This game is restricted almost entirely to males. The boys and men who play it form a rather long column with a short space between each person. All of them uniformly lift either their right or left leg, stretch it out horizontally, and grasp the knee with both hands. They hop in a straight line toward a certain goal, turn here in an arc, and hop back to the starting point. This movement is strenuous, and occasionally a chap will drop the outstretched leg if his other one will no longer carry him. The participants and spectators constantly repeat the word



in such a way that with each second syllable the foot touches the ground.

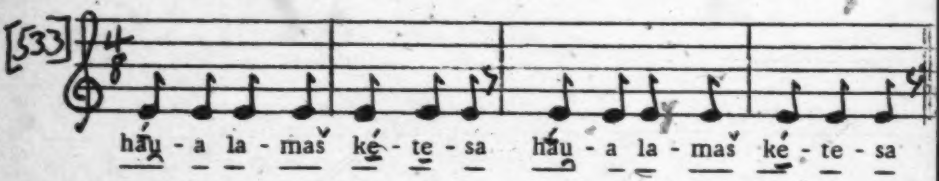
Kahlhone: This is a sort of hopping race that children are encouraged to do. Sometimes adults take part. Everyone lifts one leg from the ground in unison, /770/ either the right or left. They let their arms hang down freely. They either form a column and move very far from the starting point, most of them dropping out from exhaustion before they reach the goal, or a few form a diagonal row and hasten toward a goal from which they must immediately

/770 cont./

526 857 return to the starting point. The one who gets back first without having fallen on his other foot is the winner. The candidates in the ciexaus were most often allowed to refresh themselves somewhat with this game.

859 534 Hąualamaškétesa: This is a ring game played by girls and women, to which boys are sometimes admitted. They form a circle and hold hands. A man or woman, less often a child, places himself in the center. Then the circle moves, first in one direction, then in another, with growing speed; it finally becomes a fast whirl. The person inside becomes almost dizzy. After several rotations top speed has been reached, and the players themselves lose their balance. Suddenly their circle disintegrates when they all drop hands, and everyone makes a complete turn wherever he happens to be standing and thereupon falls to the ground. During the first few rotations the entire circle squats down at brief intervals and gets up again as fast as lightning, but after the rotation become faster this is omitted. Meanwhile they uninterruptedly and with increasing speed repeat:

[533]



The word hąualamaškétesa (201) comes from the western dialect.

201. In BD:272 we find: " 'hoalömösköta,' a senseless childish play in which this word was intoned" /cited in English/.

The same game is called tukusetewánasa (202) in the southern

202. BD:474 gives: " 'tukusatuwána,' a game and to play this game in which the players go rapidly round in circles more or fewer forming the circle till they get giddy and fall" /cited in English/.

/1474/ 2. Amusements

517 524 The way the children play when several families camp in the same spot for a few days has been described (p.576). The way they tease each other in true childish fashion is shown, for example, by the use of Adenocystis alga (Fig. 80, p.593) with which wily boys surprise unsuspecting girls. Smaller as well as larger children have a great deal of fun with the swing (p.585); concerning even middle-aged persons, Bridges maintains that "the swing also they are very fond of" /cited in English/ (VSA: XII, 53;1865). The adults, too, take advantage of being together for mutual diversion and general entertainment (373).

373. Bridges (k):240 says in a very general way: "Their principal amusements are wrestling, playing with a ball, and practicing with spears, arrows, slings, and stones" /translated from Spanish/. Bridges (a):209, Outes (g):53, Spegazzini (a):170, Whaits in MM:X, 12;1876, and others speak of dances. These reports and the few expressions in BD are, unfortunately, incomplete. Bridges (a):209 maintained that "most of their amusements are very childish" /cited in English/; these words alone show plainly how little he understood the characteristics of those Indians.

526 The popular ball-game does not require special preparation. Anyone may call the people out of the huts to a smooth, grassy area where they form a large circle. The ball, kálaka, the size of a fist, is made of the web of the albatross, first blown up to dry, stuffed with down feathers, and finally sewn up. It is tossed up perpendicularly with the flat palm of the hand; when it returns, another player must again toss it into the air and make sure that it ascends as vertically as possible. Otherwise, it usually falls to the ground outside the circle of players, which is supposed to be avoided. Lawrence, along with Bridges (i):16, declares: "The Indians are very fond of playing at ball" /cited in English/ (MM: VI, 128;1872), which they call kálaka áraku. This is almost the

/1474 cont./

526 same as the other game of ball, known as kā́lea. BD:201 mentions only kā́laka, "a ball of any kind" /cited in English/. For kā́lea one needs the stomach of a seal, which is dried and blown up. With the hand flat it is tossed vertically into the air, but since the shape of the ball is irregular, its flight is uncertain and it often falls to the ground outside the circle of players.

Whereas men and women join in ball-playing, only two men take part in wrestling, which is less popular. It is called kā́laka mūlá́ka. The name is easily explained: Before the match begins, a person chooses his opponent from the audience and challenges him by placing a little ball, kā́laka, at his feet. This man must accept if he does not want to be called a coward, and with the other man he immediately steps inside the large circle of spectators. At once they seize each other and wrestle until one of them is held down by the other in such a way that his entire back is on the ground. The spectators follow the match with loud cries and enthusiastically acclaim the victor. Tripping a person is not permitted, but one man can use his knee to kick the shank of the other so hard /1475/ that he sways and is more easily knocked over. The one who is defeated suffers a considerable affront to his own honor and that of his best friends. One of the latter immediately steps inside the circle of spectators, grasps the ball, and places it at the feet of the winner who has no choice but to prove his skill with the new opponent, and the two grapple. As Bridges (i):16 asserts: "they never tried more than twice when those matches proved equal" /cited in English/. Before the fight a yé́kamuš gives strength and stability to the knees of the wrestlers by his magic massage. The one who is defeated is called ūiya or takupḗna. The winner, á̆šaša kā́laka, who is unmarried is very much desired by girls for marriage (cf. the wrestling match of the Selk'nam in Vol. I, 1134). A general struggle, known as ha'kaiyā́wa, takes place if a man has been successively victorious over several men of another group. In order to vindicate their wounded honor, the latter appear before this man, and one of them places the little ball at his feet. The two start wrestling within the large circle of spectators which has quickly formed. If the previous victor keeps the upper hand, a friend of the defeated one will immediately challenge him, and a new struggle begins. A third and a fourth man follow.

/1475 cont./

526 Soon a second, fourth, and sixth pair have come together, and finally all the men of one group are wrestling with those of the other. Then the women also pitch in and push the wrestling pairs to the ground. Finally, in the general melee, no one knows who can boast of having won. Thus, the ones who began the wrestling believe that their reputation has been restored and both groups separate peacefully. The women do not care for this general wrestling, for it ends in a nasty brawl.

524 The so-called imitative games are more enjoyable and much more agreeable to the Yamana because they are in such perfect accord with their nature. They reproduce the movements and the calls of certain kinds of animals with amazing accuracy. Mimicry is only a supplementary aspect, for often they repeat the melody without the body movements. These games are permitted only during the čiéxaus celebration, either in the Great Hut or in front of it (p. 822); it is the duty of the winefkḗ-a to keep curious persons away. At the general concluding ceremony, however, old and young may look on (p. 811). Sometimes only men or only women take part, but usually both together. Each of these games has its own melody.

The ámaxēl, the game of the sea lion (Otaria jubata). Both men and women, clumsily and ponderously, lie down close to one another in an irregular group. Some of them stretch slowly, others look around in a bored way, some prop themselves up with their hands flat, while others, half upright, drag themselves along the ground. One person will scratch his back as though his hand were a flipper; another wallows exuberantly in the sand. One person will snore loudly until his neighbor lies down on top of him, whereupon he shoots up angrily and bares his teeth to the one who disturbed him. Two other persons fondle each other, imitating male and female. This or that one will repeatedly snap shut /1476/ his wide-open mouth, as though he had caught fish in the water, make loud chewing motions, and smack his lips with delight. In the midst of all this a few persons will roar in a deep, threatening voice. While this confused tangle moves and stirs about, the spectators nearby repeat the melody and often clap their hands. The players themselves intermittently call out hoɣ-hoɣ... or rūkrúk... After some time a woman gets up and gently taps one player after

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH6 Yahgan SH6

ESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

517 A great deal of *Yahgan* recreation was incidental to the initiation and other rites and through the feasting and social activities that accompanied set events such as marriages, or chance meetings of families at camps, or larger gatherings of longer duration occasioned by treasure trove in the shape of stranded whale. In connection with some of even the more solemn rites there were intervals of free play releasing tensions developed during the more serious phases of the rites.

276 [273] Narcotics were totally lacking. No alcoholic or other intoxicating beverages were made or used by the *Yahgan* before their contact with the Whites. Nor was tobacco grown or in any form used.

531 Art.—There was no form of sculpture or of carving in wood. The only designs, if they can be called such, were the lines, dots, and circles used in face and body painting and in the ornamentation of lodges and paraphernalia in connection with the major rites (fig. 14). There was a certain crude artistry in bodily decorations and in the personal adornments referred to elsewhere in the present paper.

All in all, there are few if any peoples in the world that possessed a more rudimentary esthetic development than the *Yahgan* and their neighbors, the *Alacaluf* and *Ona*.

526 Games and sports.—There was no gambling, no games with elaborate rules, no team games unless group wrestling could be called such, and no competitive games except wrestling.

524 857 Boys practiced with the spear, bow and arrow, and sling, and at stone throwing, but this was as much vocational as recreative activity. There were certain quite simple children's play activities, such as swinging, rolling down hillocks, endurance hopping on one foot, and group play such as tcenalóra, in which boys and girls crouched in a line one behind the other, sang together a melody in which the meaningless word "tcenalóra" was repeated, and slowly danced rocking back and forth in imitation of a canoe making its way forward through the waves. Songs sung on one long meaningless word were [533] common accompaniments of children's group play.

[481] All the women could swim; the men could not. Recreative swimming was rarely indulged in.

524 Adults' games, in some of which the children could participate, were equally simple. Such were: blindman's-buff, hopping and singing at the same time, throwing small burning sticks in the air, standing in a circle through which "it" in the middle tried to break. The ball game was popular: A ball made of seal gut stuffed with feathers or 526 grass was kept in the air by the players with strokes from the palm of the hand. Men and women might play the ball game together.

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH6 Yahgan SH6

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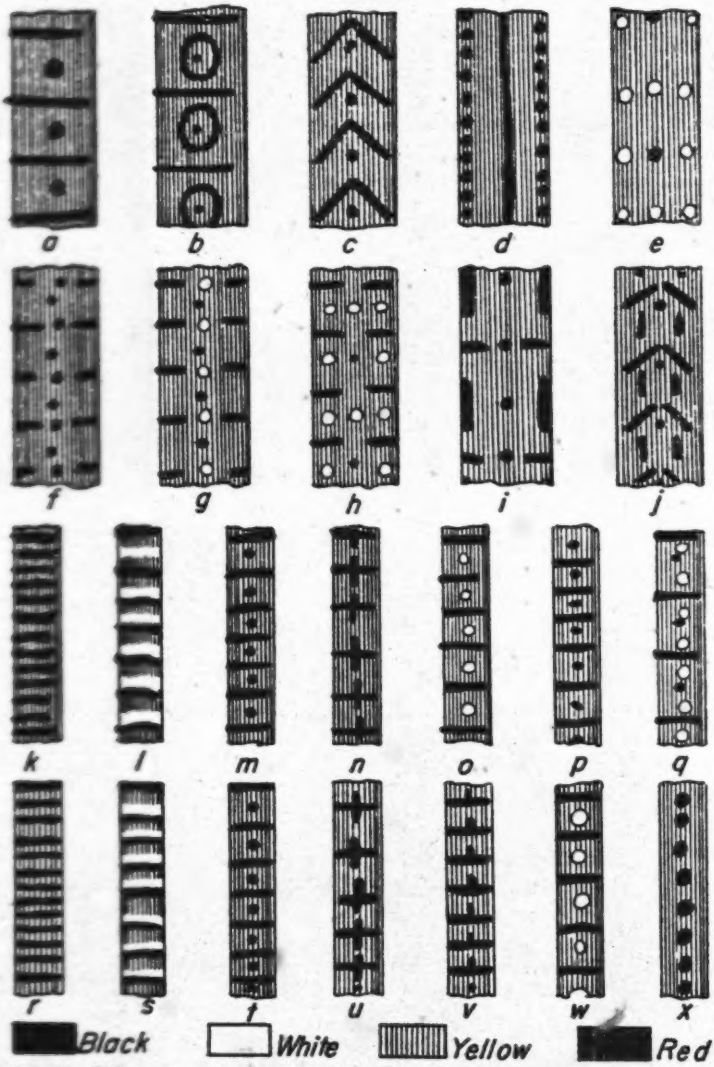

FIGURE 14.—Yahgan decorative patterns. From the painted frame of a ceremonial lodge. (Redrawn from Lothrop, 1928, pl. 2.)

526 Wrestling was indulged in a good deal, mostly by the men, although the women would sometimes intervene in the group wrestling. In pair wrestling, a man challenged an opponent by putting a small ball at his feet. The onlookers formed a circle around the contestants and applauded vigorously. The aim was to put the opponent on his back.

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH6 Yahgan SH6

526 The loser would call upon a friend who would in turn challenge the victor who had no choice but to accept. Before the wrestling match began the wrestlers were magically massaged by the medicine man. Sometimes these single matches developed into a free-for-all wrestling match in which several or all of the men would join. Sometimes, too, these general wrestling bouts ended in a serious scuffle.

538 Music.—Proverbs were absent. So, too, was poetry; the nearest approach to it was the meaningless words or syllables having a certain rhythm which occur in songs. The songs themselves were extremely 533 simple and monotonous with or without meaningless words. The *Yahgan* had many songs, sung for special occasions such as the čiéxaus and mourning rites; others intoned ad libitum. There were no lullabies. *Yahgan* songs show sundry very primitive features, according to [534] von Hornbostel (1936). There were no musical instruments at all. Even the rattle, drum, and flute were absent. Staves with which to beat time were used in certain rites.

535 Dances.—Apart from the dances carried out during the chiéxaus and kina rites, there were none of a symbolic, imitative, or dramatic type, and no war or hunting dances. The *Yahgan* danced alone, in circles or in Indian file. The women rarely danced, and the men and women never together.

RELIGION

771 Most of the religious life of the *Yahgan* centered around theism and shamanism. There was a distinct fear of the dead; there were also the mourning observances previously noted; the souls of dead shamans entered into the beliefs and practices of the medicine men. [769] But no organized ancestral cult existed, and the dead were not prayed to. Animistic beings and observances appeared marginal to the theistic cult and focal in shamanism. There were a number of miscellaneous magico-religious conceptions and observations. Each [787] *Yahgan* had a yefáčel, as a sort of guardian spirit. Various omens were believed in: for instance, the call of the owl was supposed to portend a murder or at least a death. A number, too, of taboos were observed: for instance, when traveling by canoe people had to throw waste into the fire kept burning in the canoe, and not into the water, lest the children should cry. There does not appear to have been any form of divination. The kina rite, to be described, had religious features to it, but its purpose and function were primarily social. The great bulk, therefore, of *Yahgan* religion having been taken up with theism and shamanism, in summarizing *Yahgan* theistic and shamanistic phenomena, we shall be summarizing *Yahgan* religion as such.

796 Theism.—There was a very definite belief in a Supreme Being called Watauinéwa or Watauinéiwa, who was also called by other

3: Lothrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
SH6 Yahgan SH6

Among the Yahgan, marriage by capture seems to have been less common than among the Ona. A woman given in marriage by her father against her will soon abandoned the undesired husband. In fact the Yahgan showed a tendency to change husbands and wives not infrequently, which we may term progressive polygamy. According to Rev. Thomas Bridges (1884, p. 206) a man might have from one to four wives at a time, but the number was not fixed by custom.

Infidelity resulted in no fixed form of punishment, but both the offending man and woman were apt to be beaten. Shortly before our arrival a Yahgan man had disappeared. It was rumored that his wife, enraged at his amours, had beaten him with a paddle and accidentally killed him.

Children

In the old days, to judge by the number of deserted orphans set down in the mission records, the Yahgan did not greatly devote themselves to the care of the children. Abortion seems to have been a common practice, and infanticide we judge was not rare. To reach the facts is somewhat difficult because early explorers did not have sufficient knowledge to describe such practices, and the mission contact soon put an end to them or drove them under cover.

Soon after birth had taken place the Yahgan mother bathed in the sea and the new-born child was also immersed in order to toughen it. This was a rather terrible ordeal for an infant, for the sea temperatures of winter and summer range from 40° to 50° Fahrenheit, while the air at best could be described as no warmer than temperate. We have no figures to show what mortality this custom entailed, yet cannot but believe that soon after birth all but the most vigorous and robust infants were thus ruthlessly eliminated.

After delivery, not only the mother but the father as well was expected to rest for a week or more. In this custom we see incipient couvade.

Games and Amusements

The Yahgan to pass the time indulged in various simple games and in singing and dancing. Of necessity the young boys devoted much care and time to practice with spear, bow and arrow, sling, and stones; but while these exercises often assumed the form of

3: Lothrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
SH6 Yahgan SH6

517 sport, the practical aspect of gaining a livelihood and a desire to imitate the grown men must have been the underlying motive.
526 Wrestling was not uncommon, and was an extremely rough sport,
857 so much so indeed that death sometimes ensued. Rev. Thomas Bridges (1884, p. 179) recognizes two types of wrestling: one between individuals known as *kahleka*, another between two groups known as *ungiana*.

524 Of the simpler amusements the children had several of the "follow-
851 my-leader" type, they used a swing, they had a simple ball-game like the Ona, and they painted themselves in the style of their elders and inserted short sticks in their lips, nostrils, and eyelids. Games of these kinds have been studied by Koppers (1924).

533 Of Yahgan songs Mr. Bridges (op. cit., p. 177) recognizes several varieties. The first group, called *loima*, are songs of blood revenge; another type, called *telania*, are songs of mourning; the *arua* songs are peculiar to the medicine-men; finally there are songs called *jacos* which are sung by everybody. This last class are usually mythological in subject matter. The same authority says that the
535 dances are called *uona*. People may dance alone, in couples, or in groups, and in a circle holding hands or in line.

526 The Yahgan had no foot-racing or water sports of any kind.

Feuds

578 In general the Yahgan were not an amicable people, according
628 to most accounts. When two groups camped together trouble usually arose, and the weaker group moved away. This as well as the food quest accounts for their frequent changes of residence. Sometimes a fight might start between two individuals and then all their friends and relatives joined, probably in an endeavor to stop the encounter but sometimes to aid their man. Clubs, paddles, spears, slings, and stones were the weapons used. General mêlées, however, can not have been common, for Rev. Thomas Bridges sponsors the statement[1] that in the thirteen years between 1871 and 1884 only twenty-two murders had taken place. I have no figures for the Ona, but killings must have been much more frequent among them than among the Yahgan.

628 The causes of quarrels among the Yahgan were such as are found among all primitive tribes, namely, insult, theft, adultery, and the

[1] In *South American Missionary Magazine*, London, 1884, p. 224.